

Etzig, Trista

From: jimmcdonnall@dtnspeed.net
Sent: Friday, May 19, 2006 2:09 PM
To: Scblockgrants,
Cc: Scblockgrants,
Subject: USDA letter on Spec. Crop Block Grants
Attachments: ATTACHMENT.TXT

MCDONNALL FARMS
8820 J
Delta, Ohio

5/19/06

U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Av. , SW.
Stop 0243
Washington, DC 20250-0243
Attn: Trista Etzig

As one of the owners of McDonnall Farms I would like to express the concern we have with a proposed rule issued April 20 , 2006 : Specialty Crop Block Grant Program; Notice of Request for Approval of a New Information Collection. My brother , my son and I operate a farm in northwest Ohio. One of the crops we grow , the major crop, is tomatoes for processing. Those tomatoes are used for ketchup ,canned whole products, diced for salsa , and many other specialty products. We have 6 full time employees and 15 seasonal people to help us.

The section 1290.4 of the rule is the area that concerns us in that it gives priority to Fresh Specialty crops . The rule states (a) To be eligible for a grant, the project(s) must enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops. Priority will be given to fresh crop projects. We feel congress did not intend for one form of specialty crop to be given priority over others, nor to restrict state departments of agriculture from promoting a variety of specialty crops.

The rule does not recognize the growing body of evidence on the benefits of canned fruits and vegetables. The nutritional benefits for example, there is more lycopene from processed tomatoes than fresh . Also , it is more economical to us canned fruits and vegetables . This is something that's not only important to families but to schools and other institutional organizations.

On behalf of McDonnall Farms ,I appreciate your considering these comments when final decisions are made. As proposed we feel this rule does not promote open competition. We feel it should promote all forms of fruits and vegetables in promoting good health.

Sincerely,

James M. McDonnall
McDonnall Farms
419-822-4271
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5/19/2006